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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE 981

REVIEW OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF NIE-29 "PROBABILITY OF AN INVASION OF YUGOSLAVIA IN 1951"

NIE-29/1

Published 4 May 1951

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...to C/DCI REGISTRY,
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The intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Joint Staff participated in the preparation of this estimate. All members of the Intelligence Advisory Committee concurred in this estimate on 3 May.

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NIE-29/1: REVIEW OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF NIE-29 "PROBABILITY OF AN INVASION OF YUGOSLAVIA IN 1951"

THE PROBLEM

To review the conclusions of NIE-29, "Probability of an Invasion of Yugoslavia in 1951," in the light of recent developments.

CONCLUSIONS

There has been no new evidence since the publication of NIE-29 (20 March 1951) enabling us to determine whether the Kremlin has decided on an attack on Yugoslavia in 1951. There have been no major changes in Soviet strength or dispositions that bear upon the likelihood of an attack by Soviet forces in 1951. However, Satellite capabilities for initiating an attack on Yugoslavia with little or no warning have increased, and Satellite military preparations are continuing. Although developments to date do not appear to warrant the conclusion that a Satellite attack will take place in 1951, or indicate that such an attack is more likely this spring than later in the year, they do give added emphasis to the conclusion of NIE-29 that "an attack on Yugoslavia in 1951 should be considered a serious possibility."

DISCUSSION

1. In NIE–29 it was concluded, *inter alia,* that "the extent of Satellite military and propaganda preparations indicates that an attack on Yugoslavia in 1951 should be considered a serious possibility." A number of developments since the publication of NIE–29 (20 March 1951) call for a review of this conclusion.

2. Among these developments are the following:

a. Heavy Soviet ground force equipment continues to arrive in Hungary, Bulgaria, and Rumania, further improving the balance of these Satellite forces;

b. Certain Bulgarian military units recently have been redeployed in the direction of the Yugoslav border, and at present at least one Bulgarian tank division and four infantry divisions are disposed along the Yugoslav border;

c. Expansion of the Bulgarian and Hungarian armies is continuing;

d. Jet aircraft have recently been observed in all of the European Satellites except Albania;

e. Satellite airfields continue to be enlarged and improved;

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f. Early-warning and/or ground-controlled intercept radar has recently been observed in the vicinity of both Sofia and Budapest;

g. The number of heavy Soviet AA guns in both Bulgaria and Hungary appears to be increasing;

h. The apparent food shortages and the rationing of an increasing number of food products in the southern Satellites suggests that stockpiling may be under way;

i. Yugoslav-Satellite diplomatic relations are marked by increasing friction. A number of protests have been exchanged over recurring border incidents; several consulates have been closed and diplomats expelled; and the Yugoslavs have arranged for the Swiss Government to represent Yugoslav interests in the event that relations are severed between Belgrade and Budapest;

j. Soviet and Satellite propaganda attacks on Yugoslavia have been intensified and have become more specific. Many of the themes which had previously been directed abroad are now being disseminated to Soviet and Satellite audiences, and especially to party and military personnel.

k. The materiel of the Yugoslav Army and Air Force continues to deteriorate, with the inevitable concomitant effect upon the operational efficiency of the Yugoslav forces, and until Western military aid arrives in substantial quantities, Yugoslavia will become increasingly vulnerable to Satellite attack;

l. High Yugoslav officials have privately expressed increased concern over the possibility of an early Satellite attack. Although the timing of these statements suggests that they may in part have been designed to support the recent formal Yugoslav requests for arms and equipment from the US, the fact that Yugoslavia is openly requesting such assistance may also be interpreted as further evidence of genuine fear of Satellite aggression.

3. Some of these developments, such as the movement of ground forces in Bulgaria, the border incidents, the Cominform propaganda campaign, and the deterioration in Yugoslav-Satellite relations, point toward Yugoslavia as the target either for a military attack or for an intensified war of nerves. Others, however, such as the arrival of jet aircraft, the airfield construction program, and evidence of stockpiling appear part of an over-all program of military preparations throughout the Satellites and the Soviet Zones of Germany and Austria.

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